

Early Spring 2014 San Juan National Forest Newsletter



News for employees, retirees & partners



Kara Chadwick

Change in Leadership Announced

DURANGO - Kara Chadwick will be on the job as the new San Juan National Forest Supervisor in early April, 2014. Kara will be coming from the USFS Washington Office, where she has been Assistant Director for Forest Management since 2011.

Kara started her federal career in 1985 working on fire and timber crews for the Kootenai National Forest. From 1988 to 2002, she held timber and fire positions on Ranger Districts for the Clearwater, Kaibab and Nez Perce National Forests. She also worked as an Ecosystem Analysis Team Leader on the Clearwater during this time.

From 2004 to 2010, Kara held District Ranger positions on the George Washington and Jefferson, and Clearwater national forests. In 2010, she moved to the Washington Office as Liaison in Minerals and Geology before moving into her Assistant Director position.

Since 2008, Kara has been a Resource Unit Leader with the Southern Area Type I Blue Incident Command Team.

"I have enjoyed my time in Washington but am excited to get back out to the field to work with folks, both agency and partners, to get work done on the ground," she says.

"On the personal side, I look forward to all the great outdoor experiences your part of the country has to offer."

Kara holds a Bachelor's degree in Natural Resource Management from the University of Montana and is a member of the Society of American Foresters.

She enjoys hiking, backpacking, running and fly-fishing.

- Ann Bond



San Juan Public Lands Center,
Durango

Thanks to Ron for Filling In

DURANGO - Ron Archuleta, who served as Acting San Juan National Forest Supervisor for the past few months, has returned to the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest and Pawnee National Grassland, where he is Deputy Forest Supervisor.

Ron started his USFS career on the San Juan NF in 1981 as a wildlife biologist on the former Mancos RD.

"I grew up in southwestern Colorado, and it has always had a special place in my heart," Ron says.

"I really enjoyed working with the employees, communities and partners of the San Juan during the search for your new supervisor."

- Ann Bond



Ron Archuleta

SAN JUAN PUBLIC LANDS CENTER



Steph is Budget Officer

DURANGO - Stephanie Kelley has been promoted to San Juan Budget Officer after serving as Acting Budget Officer. Over the past four years she has been the San Juan Budget Analyst and Real Property Specialist. Stephanie came to the San Juan from the Albuquerque Service Center (ASC), where she worked in financial system programs, including incident finance, claims and accounting.

Stephanie started her federal career at ASC in 2006 and worked her way up to Legal Administrative Specialist prior to coming to the San Juan NF. She and husband, Chasen, are the proud parents of son, Landon, 17 months.

- Ron Duvall



Maeghann is Purchasing Agent

DURANGO - Maeghann Dale is the new San Juan NF Purchasing Agent handling procurement transactions, including fire, and the USFS Bank Card Program. Maeghann comes to us from Salt Lake City, Utah, where she was Contract Specialist for the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) at the Upper Colorado Regional Office since 2012.

Maeghann started her federal career in 2008 at BOR's Western Colorado Area Office in Durango where she served as Administrative Assistant, Mail and Files Clerk, and General Clerk. She received the BOR Administrative Service Professional of the Year Award in 2009 and is a member of the National Society of Leadership and Success.

Maeghann holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Fort Lewis College and is studying to take the Graduate Management Admission Test this spring.

- Ron Duvall



Kay Honored by Region

DURANGO - Kay Zillich, USFS/BLM Abandoned Mine Coordinator, is being recognized by the USFS Rocky Mountain Region for her work with partners to restore high-altitude fens impacted by historical mining north of Silverton.

Kay helped design the restoration techniques used to rehabilitate the high-altitude fens. The Chattanooga fen, which hosts a unique species of sphagnum moss, had been partially de-watered by ditches. The Ophir Pass fen had been disturbed by iron mining and was eroding metal-laden soils into a tributary of the Animas River.

Kay partnered with Durango Mountain Resort (DMR) and Mountain Studies Institute (MSI) over six years on the projects. DMR funded work as mitigation for wetlands impacted on its private property and hired MSI to direct and monitor the project. MSI recruited volunteers and raised additional funding. Other partners included Michigan Tech University, EPA, Colorado Mountain Club, National Forest Foundation, Navajo

Dine' Leadership, and Southwest Conservation Corps.

Ditches were dammed and filled with excelsior bales to restore hydrology, and areas of dried-out wetland soil were re-contoured. Plugs of native vegetation were planted by hand and will be mulched every year to protect soils from erosion and vegetation from frost damage.

Monitoring wells already show dramatic increase in water tables in previously dry areas, and planted sedges and mosses are growing well. Mulching at the Ophir fen immediately decreased sediment and metals delivered to the stream.

Publications in scientific journals and field trips for numerous wetland practitioners are spreading the techniques so that other impacted fens and wetlands can benefit from the proven success of the restoration.

- Ann Bond

SAN JUAN PUBLIC LANDS CENTER



Mark Retires

DURANGO - Mark Ball, San Juan NF Wildlife Program Leader since 2002, retired in January. Mark began his USFS career in 1980 as a Range Conservationist on the Rio Grande NF.

In 1985, he moved to the Pawnee National Grassland as Range Conservationist. In 1991, he became Wildlife Biologist for the Pawnee National Grassland, until heading for the San Juan in 2002.

During his career, he is proud of; "being of service to district biologists to assist them in completing the 'real' work of putting conservation actions on the ground."

Mark holds a Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Conservation and Master's degree in Range Ecosystem Management from the University of Florida. Wife, Laurie Ball, has two more years before she can join him in retirement. Daughter, Lindsay, and husband, Patrick Wilson, are moving to the island of Saint Martin while

Patrick attends medical school.

"I believe lengthy visits from the in-laws are in order, even mandatory," Mark says. "I also hope to rekindle my passions for fishing, hunting and camping, and take up a new hobby flying model airplanes."

- Ann Bond

You've Got the Power



Here's a great opportunity to save money, be a responsible resource steward, and comply with legislation and executive orders.

Power-It-Down is a national initiative encouraging USFS employees to power down electronic devices and technology peripherals.

The campaign has the potential to save the agency \$2.5 million a year, plus significantly reduce CO₂ emissions.

The San Juan NF Green Team is requesting employees power down electronic devices and peripherals each Friday afternoon before leaving for the weekend, unless there is an explicit, business-related reason not to do so.

This won't only save power but also reduce wear and tear on equipment. Volunteers at each office will collect Monday morning/Friday afternoon meter readings to monitor savings.

You can decrease impacts to computer start-up times by migrating to Windows 7 and using your LincPass card to log into your computer, VPN and eAuthentication.

- Mary Blanchard

Daniel is Electronics Technician

DURANGO - Daniel Laswell is handling radio communications as San Juan NF Electronics Technician.

Daniel began his federal career in 1996 with the U.S. Army and worked since 2011 for the BLM Farmington District Office as Telecommunications Specialist.

He holds a Bachelor's degree in Networking and lives in Durango.

- Ron Duvall



Thanks

Sincere thanks for all the emails and cards from friends and former coworkers at the San Juan NF and BLM following my recent health problems.

I feel great and continue to do well at rehab. I've lost weight so I feel better, old clothes fit again, and my heart can work less. I hope to get down that way and visit sometime this year.

-Paul Peck



COLUMBINE RANGER DISTRICT



Anthony to be Acting District Ranger

BAYFIELD - Anthony Madrid, currently Jicarilla District Ranger on the Carson NF, will arrive in early April to assume duties as Acting Columbine District Ranger while Matt Janowiak is in California on a special detail. Matt will be in Goleta, California, serving as the Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor on the Los Padres NF until July.

Anthony brings a diverse natural resource background and host of leadership skills to his detail on the San Juan. He began his USFS career in 1999 on a Santa Fe NF engine crew, worked as Soil Conservationist for the Natural Resource Conservation Service, and as Range Management Specialist for the Lincoln NF.

In 2007, Anthony became first Range Staff, then Canjilon RD District Ranger in 2011 on the Carson NF. Since 2012, he has served as the Carson's Jicarilla District Ranger managing a unit that includes complex range and oil and gas programs, as well as the Jicarilla Wild Horse Territory.

- Ron Archuleta

Other Columbine News

BAYFIELD - Congratulations to Columbine Resource Assistant Scott Justham and his wife, Heather, who had a new baby, Asher, in January, and to Columbine Assistant Engine Captain Wes Crider, who married Karena Miller in February.

Columbine Range Staff Jared Whitmer is away on a special detail as Acting Deputy Ranger for the Tonto NF Pleasant Valley RD. Columbine Range Management Specialist Beth Jones is filling in as Acting Range Staff.

Congratulations are also in order for the *Chupacabras*, who are the 2014 Snowdown Broomball champions, repeating their performance of 2012 at Durango's annual winter festival.

- Matt Janowiak



(L-R, back) Kerri Merkel, Lance Martin, Stan Sparks, Jeff Seebach, Parker Jardine, Eric Herchmer.
(L-R front) Pete Merkel, Chad Carpenter, Tom Boness, Cherie Zorilla, Mark Winkworth.



Missing Michael

DURANGO - Michael Rash, who retired in 2007 after working seasonally for the Animas and Columbine Districts as Sanitary Technician, passed away in January. For more than 20 years, Michael drove more than 100 miles a day to maintain and clean dozens of dispersed toilets. He also served as a campground host and worked as a compliance checker on the district.

"I liked Michael instantly upon meeting him and within an hour made him a campground host," says Biff Stransky, longtime District staffer. "As a seasonal employee, he turned out to be a real gift to the developed recreation program."

Michael moved to southwestern Colorado in 1974 after working eight years for Marriott Hotels in Texas. He soon met and married his late wife, Maggie.

"Michael was one of a kind," says Mena Showman, Columbine Recreation Technician. "He loved to tell funny stories, especially about his escapades. He was a down-to-earth, honest, gentle, appreciative soul."

- Ann Bond

COLUMBINE DISTRICT



Gretchen Regionally Honored

BAYFIELD/PAGOSA SPRINGS - Gretchen Fitzgerald, San Juan NF Headwaters Zone Forester, has been selected to receive a Regional Forester's Honor Award for her work to restore burned areas and help design for mitigations for potential stresses from climate change.

Gretchen acquired two grants for \$1.2 million through the National Forest Foundation. Funding came from Chevrolet and Disney corporations in exchange for carbon offsets. She has supervised planting of 1,300 acres, and results are being monitored.

Gretchen has been a leader in educating staff on the importance of implementing mitigations to promote resiliency to climate change. She keeps current with research and projects in other areas to help formulate direction for the San Juan. She also encourages interdisciplinary teams and line officers to question how management decisions of today will affect landscapes of the future.

Gretchen has also secured funding from the BLM and partnered with CU Boulder, Mountain Studies Institute and Fort Lewis College to develop studies on the pace of climate change at the local level. Her efforts have led to a downscaled climate modeling effort with CU Boulder and the National Center for Atmospheric Research.

Gretchen works as a forester for both the Pagosa and Columbine ranger districts and also finds time to teach nature studies programs in local elementary schools.

- Matt Janowiak

Where Are They Now?



BAYFIELD - The Columbine RD is proud to help employees further their public lands careers, and we like to keep up with our alumni. Here are some quick updates on three we're especially proud of:

Rob Brennecke arrived on Columbine in 2012 and spent two years as a seasonal employee. Before that he worked for the Cedar City Hotshots in Utah for three summers. This summer he will attend rookie smokejumper training in McCall, Idaho. Congratulations to Rob on jumping and being a new father.

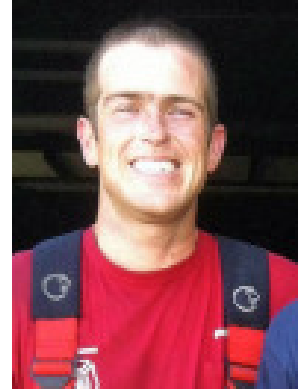
Matt Reyes (right) worked on the Columbine Initial Attack squad in 2009 after serving on our trails crew in 2008. He went on to serve three years on the San Juan Hotshots.

Since then, Matt has been a Firefighter/Emergency Management Technician with the Phoenix Fire Department. He is pursuing his paramedic license.

Jed Theobald spent summers on the Columbine RD Initial Attack squad from 2010 to 2012. He entered the Navy in 2013 and was commissioned as an Ensign Officer.

Jed just completed his Officer Basic Training in San Diego, California, and will be stationed at Pearl Harbor serving as Gunnery Officer on the USS Preble Guided Missile Destroyer.

- Wes Crider



Matt Reyes



Jed Theobald



Columbine Ranger District,
Bayfield

PAGOSA RANGER DISTRICT



Mendoza Heads South

PAGOSA SPRINGS - Richard Mendoza, Pagosa RD Forestry Technician for Timber Sale Preparation since 2002, will depart the San Juan in early April for the Apache-Sitgreaves NF in Arizona.

Richard started his federal career in sale preparation in Alaska on the Ketchikan-Thorn Bay RD in 1983. In 1988 he moved to the lower 48 to work on the Plumas NF Milford RD in California, but returned to Alaska in 1991 to work for the Wrangell RD.

Richard holds a degree in Timber Management from Lassen College in Susanville, California.

"I am proud I was able to get things done to the best of my ability on the Pagosa District," he says. "I have enjoyed the people and the beauty of the San Juans."

- Ann Bond

Jake is new Captain

PAGOSA SPRINGS - Jacob Birdsell is Pagosa's new Handcrew Captain supervising the District Initial Attack Crew. His duties also include prescribed fire, fuels reduction and trails.

Prior to this, Jake had served as a San Juan Hotshot since 2002, most recently as squad boss. In 2012 and 2013, he also served special details on the Dolores RD as engine boss and Columbine RD as duty officer.

Jake holds an Associate Degree from Hutchinson Community College, Kansas. He and wife, Karissa, enjoy hunting.

- Steve Hentschel



Winter Burning Successful

PAGOSA SPRINGS - Two rounds of prescribed burns were successfully completed in Chimney Rock National Monument this winter. District Ranger Kevin Khung said the effort was organized quickly to be able to conduct burning within timing windows that don't typically occur this time of year.

About 170 acres were completed over three days in late January and mid-February. Firefighters hand-ignited needle litter and debris left over from a 2009 mechanical fuels-reduction project.

Operations took place during mid-day hours to allow for optimum smoke dispersal. Signs were posted on highways to alert travelers, but no visibility concerns were encountered.

Assistant Fire Management Officer Fred Ellis reports all efforts were successful in meeting project objectives to further reduce flammable ground fuels.

- Brandy Richardson



Pagosa Ranger District, Pagosa Springs

DOLORES PUBLIC LANDS OFFICE



Photo by Ron Klatt

Tom Kelly working as Range Technician on the old Pine RD in the early 1980s.

Tom Rides into Retirement

DOLORES - Tom Kelly, Dolores District Recreation Special uses Outfitter-Guide Administrator since 2002, retired at the end of January, 2014.

Tom began his USFS career in 1980 on the former Pine RD in Bayfield working in forestry, range and fire. In 1987, he moved over to the Dolores RD as Range Technician. Over the years, he worked in Weed Management, and as Fire Management Officer and Outfitter-Guide Administrator.

"I enjoyed being in the technician series my entire career," Tom says. "It kept me more directly tied to field-oriented programs of work, which was what first attracted me to the Forest Service."

Tom holds an Associate of Science Degree in Forest Technology from Santa Rosa Junior College in California, and also completed course work in Rangeland Management at Fort Lewis College.

He enjoys hunting, fishing, boating, horseback riding, surfing, and traveling, especially with wife, Toni, Dolores RD Visitor Information Specialist, and their twins, Sam and Ericka, 22.

Tom says he is proud of the relationships he built within the agency and with the public, especially range and outfitter permittees. He also enjoyed the many beautiful places his job took him and the experiences he had helping to improve and protect the resources.

Retirement plans include traveling by road and by sea, especially spending more time in Kino Bay, Mexico, on the Sea of Cortez. Tom also plans to stay involved in Wildland Firefighting as a Contract/Casual hire.

- Ann Bond

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Dolores Public Lands Office, Dolores

